

## Revisión

### **Assertive communication in the comprehensive training of the Physical Culture professional.**

**La comunicación asertiva en la formación del profesional de la Cultura Física.**

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### **Abstract**

The research is focused on assertive communication as a mediator of the training process of the Physical Culture professional, a tool to change and transform the thinking, acting and communication between human beings, either in the educational or social field. Assertiveness in professional training is beneficial from a cognitive, psychological and pedagogical point of view, it intervenes in personal relationships as a facilitator of optimal understanding and empathy between the teacher and students, significantly enhances the results of the teaching process learning, and guarantees a better knowledge management, according to the new requirements and the final result that the graduate must achieve, who must reveal a high level of competence, comprehensiveness and commitment from the assertive communication itself and puts their knowledge based on the society. These aspects require theoretical and methodological preparation and lead to their implementation and the transformation of interpersonal relationships effectively. The study population is framed in the group of teachers and students of the first year of the degree, in the Faculty of Physical Culture of the University of Granma.

**Key words:** communication; assertive communication; professional training; interpersonal relationships.

## **Resumen**

La investigación está enfocada en la comunicación asertiva como mediadora del proceso de formación del profesional de la Cultura Física, una herramienta para cambiar y transformar el pensamiento, la actuación y la comunicación entre los seres humanos, ya sea en el campo educativo o social. La asertividad en la formación del profesional resulta beneficiosa desde el punto de vista cognitivo, psicológico y pedagógico, interviene en las relaciones personales como facilitadora de un óptimo entendimiento y empatía entre el docente y estudiantes, potencia de forma significativa en los resultados del proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje, y garantiza una mejor gestión del conocimiento, según las nuevas exigencias y el resultado final que debe alcanzar el egresado, quien debe revelar un alto nivel de competencia, integralidad y compromiso desde la propia comunicación asertiva y pone sus conocimientos en función de la sociedad. Estos aspectos requieren de una preparación teórica y metodológica y conducen a su implementación y la transformación de las relaciones interpersonales de forma efectiva. La población de estudio se enmarca en el colectivo docente y estudiantes del primer año de la carrera, en la Facultad de Cultura Física de la Universidad de Granma.

**Palabras Clave:** comunicación; comunicación asertiva; formación del profesional; relaciones interpersonales.

## **Introduction**

The research that is currently being carried out with a significant degree of intentionality in the academic field points towards the interactive character. The dissertation on pedagogical activity and communication is based on the subject-object relationship and communication as a subject-subject relationship, events that do not run parallel and independent. The structure and functions of the activities are arranged on a relative level at different times in the process. From recent studies, around the communication-education relationship, educational communication, also called pedagogical, emerges as a specific area of educational sciences, whose theoretical-methodological elaboration has not been fully concluded.

Educational communication has not only been linked to school education. In any social context it manifests itself with an educational nature, since it encourages interpersonal relationships, where the transmission of information, reciprocity and mutual influence are implied, factors that show the need for a more assertive exchange in the process.

The treatment of this term, as a process and a category, has been the object of analysis in several scholars, and it not only means establishing something in common with someone, but also sharing insights, ideas, and knowledge. Some specify its character of personological growth, due to the active participation of the subjects, where all information is significant and is transmitted in a democratic and formative style. In this sense, Kaplún (2002); systematizes this problem and refers to three communication models, which are grouped into two major trends: exogenous and endogenous:

In the first place, the education model with an emphasis on content is revealed, which is characterized by the emphasis on the transmission of information. The teacher plays the leading role and the students are passive recipients, in a kind of vertical education since the former assumes one of two positions: authoritarian or paternalistic.

And secondly, the education model focused on the effects is declared, which surpasses the previous one, since its psychological foundation is behavioral, where habits occupy a central and assured place in education, where automated behaviors prevail, not prone to become conditioned and trained

To this type of education corresponds the persuasive or directing communication model, where the sender performs a main task and the receiver continues to be subordinate. Feedback is added as a new element, which acts as a return response to verify if the information received was programmed and adjusted for this purpose.

And the education model that emphasizes the process is also presented, whose communication pattern is democratic, centered on dialogical participation, where the exchange between the participants, who are emitters and receivers of messages indistinctly, that is, interlocutors, and where the attention is focused on the process in question and not only on its results.

In this order of ideas, it is worthwhile to mean that the educational process, used in the first two models, evolves in an expeditious and unfathomable way towards the third to achieve a discursive, dynamic process, where the student becomes the manager of their knowledge and requires assertive communication to complement each other in their learning role.

For many psychologists, assertiveness is only the treatment of the psyche of man. As a science it goes further, since the elements, concepts and categories that define it make it a tool capable

of changing and transforming the forms and methods of thinking, acting and communicating with human beings, from the social point of view, work, or other contexts.

The lack of assertiveness in the subjects is related to low self-esteem, which encourages these individuals not to consider themselves invaluable, they choose to unprotect, neglect their rights, and thus create a vicious circle where their prerogatives and criteria are not listened to or respected. This position, during the teaching-learning process, becomes a barrier, since it is not possible to discern what the student thinks or understands how perceptible his reasoning is in relation to the social context.

There is a diversity of studies related to assertiveness, but its reflection and impact on communication are still insufficient. In this regard, Wolpe and Lazarus (1958) discover in a primal way how a person can behave assertively in some circumstances. Then Marsal (1971); Matsony cols. (1980); Borstein et al (1977); Romano and Argyle (1978) include assertiveness to the body of social skills with the structured method of training. Sánchez (1983) defines it as a "direct expression of one's own feelings, legitimate desires and opinions, without threatening or punishing others and without violating the rights of those people"

From another perspective, Arredondo (2015) states that "assertiveness is knowing how to communicate in a very clear, concise and striking way with the listener, so that the message could be interpreted as it is actually transmitted, without any distortion..." Furthermore, Guzmán (2018) considers that "assertive communication for work success lies in the fact that the human being is a social being, who needs to maintain group relationships to survive. Communication is a source of interaction between the components of an educational institution, where the teacher is the model to follow for assertive relationships"

Some refer to it as a social competence that favors the subject's freedom to express oneself. Elizondo (2003) extends the term into "the ability to express your thoughts, feelings, and perceptions, to choose how to react, and to speak up for your rights when appropriate."

The dissimilar investigations have corroborated that assertiveness is accompanied by respect for others and, as a direct expression, is expressed through personal feelings and desires, without affecting the individual who raises their desires or discomforts, for example Rodríguez, (2005) expresses: "assertiveness is based on respect and therefore involves the freedom to express ourselves, respect others and assume responsibility for our actions."

Based on the above, it is important that both teachers and students know how to effectively handle assertive communication. For Arellano (2006), this means that the teacher understands the student not as a passive listener, but an active interlocutor, and sees communication not as the unilateral action of one who monologues, but a process set in motion between two and the word, as the most widespread element in human communication

In this regard, Sánchez (2008) agree with this criterion and appreciate that it is a "direct expression of their own feelings, desire, legitimate rights and opinions without threatening or punishing others, without violating the rights of those people." Meanwhile, Medina (2013) describes that "assertiveness is not just knowing how to say yes or no, it is something deeper that has to do with the person's state of mind, their strength, and their needs. Furthermore, the decision depends of whom or what type of situation is facing, to do one thing or another".

To understand the assertive communication concept, it is necessary to return to the reference expressed by Naranjo (2010), who identifies it as "a skill that is part of an individual's behavior, and as behavior it is feasible to be modeled, developed". It is a component of the socio-emotional competence that allows the subject to express their emotions with self-control in social relationships. The purpose of assertive communication is to articulate and favors the relationship with the other and with oneself.

In this regard, Casadiego et al (2015) consider "assertive communication as a social relationship skill is a form of conscious expression, through which ideas, desires, opinions, feelings or rights are manifested in a congruent, clear, direct, balanced way, honest and respectful, without the intention to hurt or harm, and acting from a perspective of self-confidence".

Some tips for assertive relationships are, to name a few, face the problem, not the person; treat the specific, not the general; do not give excessive explanations; not apologize more than necessary; do not judge others or yourself for who you are; be empathetic and know how to recognize strengths and weaknesses.

From these observations it is specified that assertiveness in communication can become an irreplaceable tool for the development of the teaching-learning process, and converts the essences of knowledge into new ways of acting for students.

After studying the concepts, criteria and contributions on assertiveness and its need as part of the communicative process, the author considers that the term is indistinctly linked to behavior, skills,

feelings, emotional states, interpersonal relationships; however, it is necessary to carry out new studies related to the professional training process, as a determined way to enhance its comprehensiveness.

In this study, assertiveness is assumed as the ability to manage and direct the general and substantive processes of the educational context from communication and stimulate the student to participation, the choice of their own learning strategies, to a creative action that allows thinking the present and project the future.

Physical culture in general is a social phenomenon of great importance in any economic formation, where man is centered as a social being, with virtues and defects, the protagonist of all the events that relate him. Therefore, its integral development depends on the proper use of the word through effective communication.

## **Discussion**

The study of communication as a philosophical category is complex, as old as the human activity where it is expressed. It is a set of social relations and as a concretion of practical activity, established the theoretical-methodological premises for the scientific understanding of communication in its social dimension.

Communication and education constitute an inseparable dialectical unit. Education is an essential way for the improvement and self-improvement of the individual and society. These referents just appreciate the meaning of the development of communication for human beings, their self-improvement, their social development, in a system of interrelations with their peers, which helps to satisfy their needs.

Not only philosophers have contributed to the theoretical and methodological study of communication, but also theologians, psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists, mathematicians, physicists and cyberneticists. These scientific approaches have allowed it to be assumed within the framework of group and intergroup relationships and the need to recognize various phenomena, such as leadership, role and attitude of the subjects, which enhance personological development in the educational process.

The main communication styles are classified as passive, assertive and aggressive. The assertive is the most appropriate to establish personal relationships and communicate. This is considered

the intermediate between the aggressive and the passive style, and is characteristic of people who defend their own interests and opinions and respect the criteria of others. It is the only communication style that facilitates interpersonal relationships.

The assertive person knows how to defend their rights, even if they disagree, understand and respect the points of view of their interlocutor. They are usually people who enjoy good self-esteem, have self-confidence and are confident. They find satisfactory bipartite solutions in communication without the purpose of manipulation.

Thus, people with a passive style in their communication and social relationships are characterized by submission, passivity, accommodation, relegating their own interests, feelings, rights, opinions and desires. The aggressive style, on the contrary, is characterized by not respecting the rights, feelings and interests of others, and can even be offensive, provocative or humiliating.

An assertive communication style will be useful and functional to assert our rights, manage conflicts, conduct negotiation situations with skill, establish and maintain conversations with different people and in different contexts; It will also favor the decision-making process, request changes in behavior in other people, be direct with what you want to express without offending and take calculated risks.

The communication skills that people with an assertive style usually have are, on the one hand, empathy, that is, the ability to put themselves in the place and point of view of the other and to be able to put themselves in their situation, taking into account their feelings, expectations and your interests; on the other hand, active listening, which consists of perceiving and understanding all the information we receive from our interlocutor and their context, avoiding interruptions or prior judgments. In turn, we will emit feedback through our non-verbal communication (gestures, signals and behaviors) so that the other person knows that we are correctly receiving their message.

Consequently, with the aforementioned references, the objective must be framed in the training of the professional, defined by Fuentes (2014) as a space for the construction of meanings and meanings, a process of human development, which can be explained by its conscious nature, complex, holistic and dialectical. The leading role belongs to the student, being aware and participatory in their learning, which analyzes and qualifies the knowledge according to their personal needs and the context in which it unfolds.

Horrutiner (2008), defines professional training as "the term that in Cuban higher education, is used to characterize the substantive process developed in universities with the objective of fully preparing the student in a certain university career"

The professional training process is essential in the preparation and competence of the individual in the face of various social challenges; therefore, it is imperative to systematically demarcate all the institutional and individual components, as well as the training subjects that contribute to this purpose. In this sense, promoting assertive communication leads to a personalized teaching-learning process, depending on the contexts where the teacher and the student interact.

Conceiving the work of the teacher as an activity requires talking about professional pedagogical activity, defined by García and Cols. (1996, cited by Valle 2007), as "one that is aimed at transforming the personality of schoolchildren based on the objectives set by the State for the training of new generations. It is developed within the framework of a process of joint solution of pedagogical tasks, both of an instructive and educational nature and in conditions of full communication between the teacher, the student, the school and pedagogical group, the family and student organizations.

Assertiveness in the educational context benefits personal relationships between teachers and students and enhances learning at different levels, where the student becomes the protagonist, and the teacher, as a guide and counselor, must promote an assertive dialogue that generates the appropriation of knowledge and mutual enrichment.

The study is carried out with the participation of students and professors of the first year of the Physical Culture career, of the University of Granma, and allows in a preliminary way to offer a set of actions that will serve as a basis for the professional training process and develop a strategy communicational that allows a greater integrality towards assertiveness.

When verifying the study plans of the Physical Culture career, as a result of the collective and scientific-methodological work, and the contributions made by all the teachers of the network of centers of the specialty, the prerogatives that a model of the professional, which include the object of work and the modes of action, its field and spheres of action, as well as the objectives integrated in the instructive and educational and the system of basic and specific skills and objectives per year, which ensure a precise definition of the purposes to be achieved in the training process.

Basic or generic skills:



- Develop a dialogic communication based on the exchange of opinions and mutual respect, with adequate oral and written expression.
- Argue their professional criteria and actions on the basis of the social and psychopedagogical sciences and those applied to physical activity.
- Mastering the Spanish language as a basic support for proper communication, from the use of the technical vocabulary of the profession, so that it is reversed in their professional work, in addition to the use of knowledge of the English language for the development of communication skills in the exercise of the profession.

Specific skills or the practice of the profession:

- Schedule and develop physical education classes.
- Knowing how to execute the technical-tactical elements and the methodology of teaching games and sports.
- Organize and develop physical sports and recreational activities in various natural environments in the community.
- Design various transformative community projects, based on the diagnosis of sociocultural needs and physical activity of the population, in the context where their work and research activity takes place.

Communication is taken as the fundamental basis for the general development of the human being. It also represents the backbone of an educational organization. In this sense, the educational field is perhaps the most committed to developing assertive communication processes from a creative perspective, taking into account educational praxis as the permanent information channel, which will allow the evaluation of procedures and relationships with other people. In this way, the human factor, in communication, becomes the axis to consider various scenarios, where the use of a fluid and consistent lexicon is needed to achieve the receptivity of the messages issued.

- Two fundamental aspects are considered in the communicative process, such as: Knowing how to listen: It consists of cultivating a series of precise conditions, disposition to receive

the message (the look and the posture of the body), avoiding criticism and offenses, both the sender and the message.

- Assertive expression, adding the rules for its achievement, such as speaking in the first person, having the ability to praise (himself and others) or when expressing himself in new situations.

Professional development, according to Day (2005), includes three basic elements: the areas of development, the competencies to be achieved and the phases of their professional life. According to this author, for the teacher to develop professionally, he needs to enter a range of formal and informal activities focused on the purposes of education and the improvement of practice based on critical reflection on it.

The teacher is an agent of the educational process and his mission is to contribute to the training of students in the dimensions of human development. Due to the function, the permanence in the teaching public career requires the teacher professional suitability, proven moral solvency and physical and mental health that does not put the integrity of the students at risk.

Leadership, communication, conflict resolution and team decision-making processes contribute to the construction of a positive organizational-institutional climate and motivate teachers to develop tasks creatively. Leadership promotes respect and contributes to effectiveness in achieving the goals of pedagogical management

It is necessary to develop a permanent participatory leadership program that compensates the various techniques of assertive communication and pedagogical management, which is required in terms of the development of didactic competencies, and develop communication skills, formulate specializations in planning and curricular diversification, to generate a curriculum according to the current system

From the different stages through which the training process of Physical Culture professionals in Cuba has passed, new concepts and theoretical-methodological approaches are evidenced from a historical, cultural and dialectical perspective of human and professional development, which create the foundations for continuous improvement and permanent improvement of the quality of said training

A good professional must respect and defend the traits that identify him and feel pride in his personal performance, and towards students achieve fluent communication, feel respect in training sessions or in classes, show empathy and appreciate the development of their abilities in teaching activities, especially when the proposed objectives are met. Motivation and satisfaction are complete when an effective exchange of criteria and points of view on a topic is achieved, leaving room for argument or concern, oblivious to any indifference that affects personal relationships.

## **Conclusions**

1. Assertive communication, based on an adequate characterization of the teaching-learning process, is an effective tool to promote interpersonal relationships and consolidate results in all spheres of action.
2. The application of the different methods and techniques made it possible to show the inadequacies in communication between teachers and students, and therefore the need for research in order to solve this limitation.
3. Assertive communication and pedagogical management and personal and professional development of teachers are priorities for improving and developing communication skills, as well as formulating specializations in planning and curricular diversification according to the current educational system.

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